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The Guildsman

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December, 1941

To
Restore
All Things
in Christ



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War and Social Reform

War has been declared. It is not for us to discuss whether it could have been avoided or even to discuss the war itself; military operations, even the question of right and justice, and the like, do not come within the scope of our publication. All such affairs of war rest with the Government. Only one phase of the present war concerns us: Its effect upon the fortunes of the so-called Fascist regimes, not as to military successes, but as to the survival of their social and economic reforms. That we treat on here, on the basis of a retrospect of the past.

For months now, the American people have been in a state of uncertainty and anxiety, in virtually fearful anticipation of an official announcement of a state of open war with Germany. The hurried construction of large army camps, the ever greater speed-up in the production of war materials, and above all the threatening and bellicose utterances of the highest government officials, have created an atmosphere of paralyzing and oppressive dread. There is no evidence of a spirit of disloyalty, or even that a spirit of patriotism or of sacrifice in behalf of the nation's rights and honor is lacking. It is rather a normal reaction to the confused state of affairs, and of the consequent confusion concerning the purpose or object of war on our part. The President himself is partly responsible for this confusion and the reaction thereto on the part of the people—although reasons unknown to the public probably justify his actions in this regard; he has presented Germany and Italy as even then our enemies, he has spoken of actual possibilities and even probabilities of an attack by Ger-

many, he has given the Navy orders to shoot at sight at German vessels, he is supplying England with implements of war and insists on delivering them there right through the war zone, and yet he claimed we were not at war and would not go to war unless attacked.

Even more confusing were the announced reasons or motives for hostility toward Germany—and thus, supposed reasons for war. There we have the story, now almost forgotten, that Germany is the aggressor nation, and that we must come to the defense of the victimized nations. Then there is the other, still presented now and then, that Germany will acquire bases in Africa, South America, and so forth, and then send its bombing planes over that route to attack our cities, so that we must defend, not others, but ourselves. A third story tells of the great danger of the submarines and insists that we must fight, not for our land, but for our rights on the seas. A fourth says that, not any of our rights, but our foreign trade and sources of raw materials are endangered and that therefore Germany must be crushed. Another presents horrible pictures of life under Nazi rule and pleads that we rescue the precious treasure of liberty for stricken mankind. Similarly, there are stories in behalf of a defense of democracy, and so forth. Which story, which motive or goal will prove the true one?

Economic Ends? Regimes? Or -- ?

It is impossible at the present time to state, or even find out, what the real purpose and object of our war preparations—and of actual war, with the Axis

Powers — is; the actual plans and objectives of the Government are not known—perhaps they are not even decided upon. To take for granted that the real purpose is given in the latest news report may, in reality, be as bad a guess as the title of this article may seem inept. And yet, certain fundamental considerations may be taken as a premise for a plausible determination of the object. Do such considerations point to economic ends, such as markets or raw materials, as the issue or determinant in this newest war, on our part at present? Our country is fortunate in having abundant and varied natural resources, making us dependent on outside sources in only a relatively small number of items; our economy is generally well balanced, so that the various branches of industry have a fair market right within our borders and therefore the need of exporting is not so great. For such reasons it would seem that such economic objectives are not, or at least should not be, the cause or motive of our war activities. Even the likelihood that a victorious Germany would be a traderival, it seems, would not, or should not, decide the issue otherwise; because losses due to such rivalry, in some fields, would be offset by prospects of profitable business with a prosperous Germany, in other fields. It may be noted, that purely economic interests have been stressed very little by Government spokesmen.

True, prospects of trade losses or gains have played their role in nearly every war; they will be influencing the course today also; but in the present case these economic motives seem to be subordinate to others. Forces and trends have appeared in the world since the conclusion of the last war, which are of more vital concern than trade and commerce as such; the latter is in a way completely at the mercy of the former; so that the motives for war activities, even the selfish motives of the trader, now lie beyond the immediate domain of commerce. They concern those newer

forces and trends which touch the very vitals of trade and of all economic activities — forces and trends which denote a departure from economic and political principles of the past. Economic interests and motives unquestionably prevail today as in the past, but the decisive factor now is rather the concern over the new forces and trends setting out to dominate and refashion all economic affairs in the future.

Those newer forces and trends are commonly and rather promiscuously referred to as regimentation, dictatorship, bureaucracy, slavery, and so forth. Against everything that these terms are meant to designate there is strong opposition — partly justified, partly not. Concretely, these resented innovations are represented by the European movements known as Nazism, Fascism, and the like. It will not be denied, we believe, that the threat represented by these newer movements, as such, is a stronger motive for our war activities, at least on the part of many in the world of business, than the likelihood of purely economic effects of a possible German victory. Even the public statements of the President on related matters have pointed predominantly to such motives. So the issue of the war, as far as such motives in our country are concerned, is not so much one of business rivalry as one of conflict with newer trends affecting business — with a new economic system. The representatives and beneficiaries of our past industrial system are aware of the consequences, for themselves especially, of the success and spread of the system represented by the newer movements in Europe. Their determination to prevent such success and spread of that new system, we believe, is the prime motive, at least in the business world, for our war activities.

Opposition to regimentation and the like, we say, is partly justified — such control on the part of governments represents an abnormal state of affairs and as such should be avoided if possi-

ble; but, we say also, that such opposition is partly unjustified—such unusual means of control may be necessary and even definitely beneficial under the circumstances. When industrial and economic conditions generally are such—and that condition seems true today—that free play of the individual in business matters can no longer be permitted, that such continuation of a policy of free play imperils the welfare of the nation as a whole, then evidently a policy of control over the individual is essential; and in the absence of other effective agencies of such control, the Government is practically bound to perform that function. Even extremes—and even abuses—of such control do not invalidate the principle of control by government as such, under the assumed circumstances. For this reason opposition to the newer European movements, as far as they represent “industrial regimentation” is not justified, and therefore should not be a motive for war activities here. But there is another point, of even greater weight, to be considered, in this connection.

In the preceding paragraph, we assumed—the correctness of that assumption will hardly be denied by those competent to judge such matters—that the policy of free play in economic matters can no longer be permitted, or in the language of scholars, that the principles of Economic Liberalism must be abandoned, because of their present incompatibility with the commonweal. Taking that for granted, what does opposition to the so-called Fascist regimes today actually mean? And what does opposition to those regimes as a motive for war activities inescapably lead to? Economic Liberalism—free play in economic matters—has its counterpart in Political Liberalism—the chief characteristic of which is, not (as commonly claimed) popular elections, republican form of government, alias democracy (all this could exist under a regime rejecting the principles of Liberalism), but in what scholars call Individualism, which

means that the people are recognized as having rights only as *individuals*, that no groupings are recognized as in any way autonomous as such, that there is no authoritative intermediary between the individual and the Government. That is the essential feature of modern so-called Democracy; therein it differs from the political structure of a corporative order, toward which, we maintain, the so-called Fascist regimes are tending. What, then, does the opposition to these regimes mean? It means objection to the abandonment of the *Individualistic* structure of the modern state, while abandoning Economic Liberalism.

And just what will that mean? Where will it lead to? On our premise, that free play in economic affairs can no longer be permitted, it follows logically that control over the individual must be exercised, in those affairs. Which leads to the question: Who shall exercise that control? Under a corporative order, the control would be exercised, as to the affairs of the particular industry, by the respective vocational-group or guild, that is, the organization comprising all those associated with that particular industry. Now, opposition to the Fascist regimes, as just explained, means opposition to the *abandonment* of the Individualistic political structure, in other words, objection to the formation of such intermediary bodies of control—which will leave only the State, that is, the Government, to take over absolute and full control over economic affairs. And what does that mean? It means, in the language of scholars, an attempt to retain Political Liberalism while abandoning Economic Liberalism, which is impractical, and temporarily possible only under a form of duress. Concretely, the retention of Political Liberalism, that is the Individualistic political structure, to the exclusion of such intermediary bodies, and the abandonment of Economic Liberalism—in other words, control over economic affairs by the Government—gives us the essentials of the Communist State, with

its distinct feature of expropriation of private owners of industries following as a matter of course. So the conclusion seems inescapable that our business men by their opposition to the Fascist regimes are running straightway into Communism with eventual loss of ownership of their properties, and that war to crush the Fascist regimes will mean war to save and to spread the Communist system.

It will be noted that we do not state that *the Government* plans the destruction of the Fascist regimes. In spite of all statements and indications to the

contrary, it is not certain that there is any intention to that effect. The possibility is by no means excluded, that our warships, bombers, tanks and so forth will be used, in this war, for an entirely different purpose than such destruction. So, while war to destroy the Fascist regimes would mean war to save Communism — whose extinction seems a foregone conclusion if the Fascist regimes remain — another possible course remains. The uncertainty and anxiety among our people thus properly concerns this: Will our country carry on war to save Communism, or - -?

A "Crisis of Christianity"

During the past year or so a number of woeful predictions, particularly concerning the fate of Christianity, have been made. Shortly after the beginning of the war, after the fall of Poland, even a Cardinal spoke in terms indicating a conviction that the end of the world was at hand. On more than one occasion, the rise and power of Communism and Nazism have been referred to as constituting a veritable crisis for Christianity, in the sense that they threaten its very existence. President Roosevelt, in a recent address, evidently sought to exploit such sentiments, when he stated that the Government has evidence that Christianity will be destroyed, if Hitler wins — note well, he said nothing of what would follow if Stalin wins. (The President's venture into that field seems to have experienced an unfavorable reaction.) Very much, also, has been made of various regulations and deeds by Nazis, as though they were evidence that Christianity will be crushed — by the Nazis. The much greater danger from Communism, arising necessarily from its very principles and structure, is generally ignored; so we will do likewise, for the present.

Much of the reporting of such Nazi regulations and deeds, it is safe to say, was simply a form of Allied propaganda, and is therefore not to be taken too seriously. The general predictions of a crisis

for Christianity, as coming from Nazism, will seem true or at least plausible to those who have given the matter but little thought — and largely to those alone. The facts whereon such predictions are based may be true enough; but that does not justify the predictions as such. Far more serious situations of that character have arisen on former occasions, and Christianity has survived them all, and after the period of trial usually found itself renewed in vigor and cleansed of much dross. A typical modern instance is the onslaught on religion during the French Revolution, when bishops and priests were guillotined, churches closed, and the "Goddess of Reason" was enthroned on the altar. That surely was a greater approximation to destruction of Christianity than the present situation in Germany, and even that blew over, leaving scars perhaps but not more. That particular instance, if well studied, explains much, as will appear from what follows.

So many and so different things have been reported as evidence of Nazi plans to crush Christianity that, not a clear and convincing case, but a veritable Babel of confusion has thereby been presented to the American public — with the implied request for a conviction of the accused. Perhaps such conduct will be vindicated on the ground that matters affecting the existence of

religion are serious. Is not just that fact that this is a serious matter a most impelling reason for avoiding misrepresentation of facts bearing thereon? If, for instance, an arrest of Polish priests was likely due to their *political* activities, is it not imperative to avoid creating the impression that they were arrested because they are priests, that is, for the purpose of obstructing *religious* ministrations? Or if, for instance, certain individuals or a certain *element* among the Nazis is advocating substitution of a pagan religion for Christianity, are the interests of true religion served by reporting the affair as though the *Nazi Government* had imposed a death sentence upon the Christian Churches of Germany? And if the whole indigestible (because all necessary explanatory details are lacking) mess of such reports of Nazi crimes is left to work as a psychological ferment obstructing calm and clear judgement, the serious matter of safeguarding religion will be seriously compromised in advance of actual decision of its fate.

From Without or Within?

What has been said will suffice to cast doubts upon the charge that Nazism constitutes a crisis of Christianity, that it represents a threat to the existence of the Christian religion. This serves to call in question also the underlying assumption that any threat, from without, to the very existence of Christianity exists — excepting perhaps from Communism, which we are now leaving out of consideration. This, we believe, is not disproven, even for Germany alone, by the statement of the German Bishops, to the effect that certain innovations by the Nazis mean that “the existence of Christianity and the Church in Germany is at stake,” because this effect evidently rests on the assumption that these innovations will be permanent — which is by no means certain. These innovations — and for that matter, everything that may be put under the head: Nazi acts against religion—

must rightly be attributed to the influence of Humanistic and Liberalistic teachings. Disciples of those schools of thought are influential in Nazi circles, for the time being. But it is undeniable that primary, fundamental principles of Nazism, such as those incorporated in the idea of “leadership” and those underlying its quasi-corporative social structure, are diametrically opposed to those of Humanism and Liberalism; since these primary principles must remain, and must gain dominance, if Nazism is to remain at all, it follows that the others conflicting therewith must, in time, give way. That means that the forces responsible for the anti-religious acts will forfeit prominence and influence and a contrary spirit will come to dominate the movement.

Closely related hereto is the consideration that Nazism essentially is a social revolution, a movement representing the liquidation of Liberalism, in Germany. As such it is of the same character as the French Revolution, with this important difference that the French Revolution meant the liquidation of the medieval corporative order and introduced Liberalism, whereas Nazism, jointly with other European regimes, inverts the process. The objection, raised by some, that Nazism, as also Fascism, is not true Christian Corporatism, is irrelevant because the essential corporative trend, away from Liberalism and avoiding Communism, is there; its perfection can be left to the future. This similarity, in character, with the French Revolution points to another fact; namely, that as the French Revolution signifies the beginning of the reign or epoch of Liberalism, so Nazism signifies, as far as Germany is concerned, the beginning of a new epoch — which means that fundamental changes, also changes affecting the status and practical life of religion, will necessarily come. This unavoidability of change in religious affairs, due to a change of systems,—following the French Revolution, the Church had to adapt herself similarly—

accounts in part for the friction between the Church and the Government in Germany; in part, also, this is due to the fact that Catholics of Germany were not sufficiently active in matters of social reform or even acquainted themselves with the needs of the times and the proper remedy—to that extent, the present reverses are a form of retribution for neglect in the past, and to that extent the responsibility lies with the Catholics themselves.

These latter thoughts point to a form of crisis, brought on by the rise of Nazism—a crisis *within* Christianity, not one of dogmatic definitions, but one of social reorientation. A study of conditions at the time of the French Revolution—which we believe about the closest approximation to present conditions—will reveal that then an unwarranted attachment, within the Church, to the institutions of a decayed feudalism and of the degenerated guilds of the time was largely responsible for the reverses the Church then suffered. Failure to understand that the faults and sins of the old regime were leading to its overthrow, brought on a crisis within the Church, which was resolved only when it was realized that the past was dead and buried, that a new era had begun, and when that new era, that

new situation, was endorsed and the work of the Church fitted into the new scheme. *Such* is the real crisis also today, and the sooner this fact is realized and acted upon, the better. Not only in Germany, and throughout Europe, but also here—for here also a movement similar to Nazism will certainly develop—it is well to prepare to resolve this crisis speedily by acquiring a thorough grasp of the character of the new era and promptly adapting the organization and ministrations of the Church thereto. A strange—really instructive—contrast prevails between the attitude of Communists and that of Catholics toward Nazism. Communists quite generally express the fear that a victory of Nazism will make Catholicism supreme in the world [Are perhaps other circles also determined to prevent such a victory for the same reason?]. Ernst Henri, a Communist, or at least Communist-sympathizer, and author of two books against Hitler, states definitely that Hitler's reunion of Europe will lead to a modern Holy Roman Empire. Are the children of darkness wiser than the children of Light? Are Catholics being misled, in the interest of a preservation of the British Empire or the like, to regard a promising development as a harbinger of their doom?

Thyssen's "I Paid Hitler"

Of particular interest to our circle of friends, we believe, is the publication of Fritz Thyssen's account of his personal experiences with Hitler and other Nazi leaders and of happenings in Germany since the rise of Nazism as also his appraisal of the past as well as of the future. The special interest of his account arises from the fact that he is a Catholic, one of Germany's leading industrialists, and for some time one of the main financial backers of Hitler's movement. The story of the early days of Nazism has been presented to Americans almost exclusively by Hitler's enemies, and chiefly by Socialists and Communists. An explanation—a true

and full explanation—of the causes responsible for its rise, its progress and present position of influence and dominance—which would imply a description of actual conditions in Germany during the ten years following the Versailles Treaty—is not available and will to all appearances not be available for many years, not until passion and prejudice subside and a desire for the truth will be stronger than the desire for sensation and for the exploitation of such accounts for ulterior purposes; until such time, until the true and complete story of Nazism is impartially told, until the sources whence it sprang are known and its precise character understood, it

is a matter of prudence to guard against reports and hasty verdicts.

In Thyssen's account—the publisher gave it the catchy but really senseless title: "I Paid Hitler"; Thyssen did not *pay*, but *financed* Hitler—one naturally expected to find a sober and impartial explanation of Nazism, in its origins, its essence, its promises or dangers. To a very moderate extent, this expectation is met; some parts or rather passages of the book shed some light on certain obscure phases of the movement. But the book as such is of interest mainly for another reason, which is evident from the very circumstances under which it came into being. Emery Reves, who secured the rights of its publication, utilized every means, with the official assistance of the French and British Governments at the time (before the German invasion of France), to contact Thyssen when he entered France, prevailed upon him to write his "memoires," and assisted him (and probably more than merely assisting) in the preparation of the manuscript. The real motive for its publication is sufficiently indicated by M. Reves himself, in his foreword; he asked Thyssen outright: "Do you want to help us destroy Hitler or not?" and when Thyssen's reply, (according to Reves) was an unconditional "Yes," Reves sought to convince him that "the things he [Thyssen] had to say and the documents and material he possessed must be published during the war and not after if they were to produce their full effect" (for the desired purpose) and finally succeeded (to take his own word for it) in having Thyssen "understand that in the middle of a war against Hitlerism there was no use having powerful weapons in one's possession and withholding them from instant use." That will suffice to show that the book was gotten out purely for propaganda purposes, and circumstances at the time of its writing will justify the conviction that a form of pressure connected with asylum and hospitality in a country hostile to one's fatherland

was brought to bear upon the author. The further fact that M. Reves is, or rather was then, president of Cooperation Publishing Company, an organization with headquarters in Paris, serving prominent newspapers all over the world with pro-Ally material, confirms such convictions. Finally, the fact that the shortly following swift German advance in France left the incompletely revised manuscript in the hands of Reves, who escaped with it to England, while Thyssen's whereabouts remained a mystery, leaves room for suspicion that the manuscript may have been revised, or doctored, before publication, to suit its evident purpose better.

These facts need to be well known, in the interest of truth, in the interest of fairness to Thyssen himself (whose true views and convictions are probably not given therein), and in the interest of the greater cause of world order and peace. Some points developed in the book, as was mentioned, contribute toward a better understanding of the subject of Nazism; in certain other passages the author expresses himself very candidly and clearly in the interest of Germany; but by and large there is an unmistakable readiness to comply with the wishes and to support the desires and the cause of those who urged him to reveal his experiences and his innermost feelings to the world, at such an unfortunate time; and, finally, there are faults, quite apparent to the attentive reader who is seeking reliable information in this grave matter, which tend to have one wish, for the author's sake and for the sake of Germany and of the world at large, that it had never been written. This may be extreme and severe; but we believe the gravity of the present situation, wherein Allied propagandists are concerned solely with achieving their set goal to the exclusion of every other consideration, fully justifies our attitude in this matter.

We regard it as something of a tragedy that Thyssen's story of Nazism, which might have been expected to be

a source of fundamental and trustworthy information, was thus turned into a means of war propaganda. This is tragedy—and irony—because Thyssen is at pains to inform his readers that he broke with Hitler because of his opposition to the war. It contains another bit of irony; the author, to support his opposition to the war, speaks of the unpreparedness of Germany for war (which he blames onto Hitler—assuming that he actually wrote it), and he himself was caught in the successful and swift advance of the Germans in France! For other reasons, we regard the publication of the book unfortunate for the author himself. One reason is, it reveals a number of inconsistencies or contradictions as also misjudgements on his part. For instance, in a letter which he sent to Hitler, from Switzerland, he wrote: "I further remind you that Goering was certainly not sent to Rome to see the Holy Father and to Doorn to interview the former Kaiser, in order to prepare them for the forthcoming alliance with Communism." (p. 25) Thyssen's view that Hitler's pact with Stalin was identical with an alliance with Communism was entirely wrong, as subsequent events have shown very plainly. Again, Thyssen argues that the German Government of that time should not have signed the Versailles Treaty and in substantiation of his position argues: "Brockdorff's [Count Brockdorf-Rantzau, an official member of the delegation] advice was to let the Allies overrun Germany and let them take the responsibility for military action against a people which would not defend itself." (p. 61) And a few pages later, when treating on French occupation of the Ruhr, he insists: "If France had succeeded in getting possession of the Ruhr industry, the country [meaning Germany] would never have been able to recover." (p. 63) Furthermore he claims: "The National Socialists never had a real economic plan. . . Hitler failed because he thought it very clever to agree with everybody's opinion." (p. 134) And yet,

for a different purpose, he presents a story that Hitler's father is the illegitimate son of someone at the Rothschilds, intimating that Hitler is a grandson of one of Europe's greatest financiers, or whatever the Rothschilds should be called. (See p. 159) Finally, these strange (for a German) statements regarding the war: "Hitler will lose the war; this is my conviction. . . It is my conviction that the *barbaric hordes* [meaning the German armies] in the west will eventually be broken. . . [and then speaks of Belgium and Holland as] nations which are defenseless in the face of the German *colossus* . . [and of France as, for the second time] the *victim* of a ruthless and devastating war." (p. 248-252)

From a few sketchy passages we may piece together an explanation of the rise of Nazism. On an early page, Thyssen speaks of his aversion to political activity as such, and then incidentally gives us this bit of information about conditions in Germany during those years: "But in a crisis-ridden State, such as Germany was from 1918 to 1933, an industrialist is drawn, willy-nilly, into the vortex of politics. After 1930 the aspirations of German industry may be summed up in one phrase: 'A sound economy in a strong State.' This was, I remember, the slogan of a meeting of the Ruhr industrialists in 1931. It was at the height of the economic and social crisis. During that winter there were six or seven million unemployed, that, is about one-third of the entire German laboring population. The Weimar Republic was torn asunder by party and other strife, and the ship of State was at the point of foundering. The Government was incapable of assuring a proper administration, or just plain everyday order. Even the police were unable to cope with the daily riots and the political disturbances in the streets." (p. 32) And: "The internal crisis was aggravated by the pressure exercised by the victors." (p. 34) Elsewhere (pp. 47-56 and 80-83) he reports on Communist uprisings and actual establishment of

Communist regimes. That should, it seems, have logically led to a different attitude, and thus leads to the suspicion that industrialists like Thyssen first really supported Hitler only to get the Communists off their own backs and deserted him when he had rid Germany of the Communist danger.

Important Points Ignored

Unfortunate for the author and for the world at large we have designated the publication of the book "I Paid Hitler." Our view on this score, we feel, is supported by a few other facts. We feel that if Thyssen had written under other circumstances, he would have written otherwise, and if not, it would have been better not to write. He makes no secret of it that in those days when Nazism appeared "the question to be decided [in Germany] was whether industry and economic activity in general should be taken over by the State; or, if not, what was to be the role of the State in relation to economic life" (p. 120) — the very real danger of a Communist State in Germany at that time is indicated also by others; he also gives it as his conviction that beside a corporative order, there "are only two other solutions: Either to manage our economic life as before — in a reactionary manner; or to do the opposite—abolish private enterprise, & let industry be run by the State" (p. 124) — that is, beside Corporatism, there is only Capitalism and Communism; he reports that he favored and promoted a corporative order (p. 126); but rejects the German "Labor Front" as "Ley's own creation" and in connection therewith speaks of "Ley's fight against the corporative system." (p. 127) His own knowledge of Corporatism he then reveals in the passage: "The idea of a corporative order is not mine. It was suggested by a well-known professor of national economy in Vienna, Othmar Spann." (p. 124)

There is tragedy in this conclusion. Has Thyssen, the prominent Catholic industrialist, never heard of the ency-

clical "Quadragesimo Anno" or of the writings of Bishop von Ketteler, Father Albert Maria Weiss, Father Heinrich Pesch, Baron von Vogelsang—all eminent German and Austrian authorities on the subject of Corporatism? Has he no knowledge of corporative institutions in the past? Is he unaware of the fact that the introduction of a corporative order is not a matter of imposing some cut-and-dried scheme, be it that of Spann or another, but primarily a matter of social reunion of the two segments of industry, employers and employees, and generally a matter of evolving organic structures to whom the conduct of the affairs of respective industries may be entrusted? His outright condemnation of what is being done in that regard in Germany, we fear, will serve to confirm the impression of those in this country who believe that only a perfect form of corporative order can be approved and that every imperfect pattern must be rejected. This latter attitude assumes that social institutions are perfect immediately, instead of being gradually perfected, and exposes us to this grave danger: On the well-established premise that Liberalism or Capitalism must be abandoned, a rejection of a preliminarily imperfect form of Corporatism leaves no other alternative but Communism. To that tragedy Thyssen's ill-advised work "I Paid Hitler" is contributing, as a "powerful weapon" in the middle of "a war against Hitlerism."

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In our reading we came across the following quotation from an address, in Boston, in 1896, of Senator Albert Beveridge of Indiana: "We are a conquering race... We must obey our blood and occupy new markets and if necessary new land. . . . Fate has written our policy; the trade of the world must and shall be ours." So the most objected to feature of Hitlerism has had its advocates right here; and we believe they are here today as the real instigators of trouble on our country's part.

FIELD MARKERS

German Critics of Germans

Last month we called attention to the fact that in England, not Hitler, but the German people are now the target of attack. Somehow that new policy has swiftly been adopted here and, strangely enough, by some of those of German descent. Thus a German-American cleric of some prominence contributing regularly to "The Wanderer", while treating rather critically (in its Nov. 27 issue) on Emil Ludwig's book "The Germans: Double History of a Nation," concedes: "Still, there is something wrong with Germany; it could not otherwise become the object of such universal condemnation as is heaped upon its government and its people by practically all contemporary nations." Even ignoring the evident exaggeration, the argument is not conclusive. Was anything wrong with Christ when all the Jews cried: "Crucify Him"? Are not many worthy individuals and movements the victims of prejudice, ignorance and slander? The December issue of "Social Justice Review", official organ of the Catholic Central Verein (the organization representing the German Catholic element in this country) takes the French writer "Pertinax" to task for publishing something unfavorable to England, while it has never vindicated the cause of Germany on the plea that it is not in politics! Prof. F. W. Foerster, an exile from Austria and now living in this country, recently wrote a friend in Philadelphia, as a commentary on certain articles in German-American publications: "When I read such articles, I am much depressed and ask myself: Are the people of Germany afflicted with incurable moral insanity whenever they deal with matters of politics? Are the people of Germany obsessed with incurable megalomania as were the Maccabees previous to the destruction of Jerusalem? Are the Germans

in America obsessed with this godless notion that—after such unspeakable crimes of the second and third reich, after such clear evidence of the immaturity of the German people and of its inability to defend itself against its own bandits and to put a stop to their crimes against other nations—they do not hesitate to demand, naively, the "right of self-determination" so that the third world war may be prepared and Europe finally ruined? The people of Germany accordingly enjoy the privilege to commit monstrous crimes and then to unload the responsibility onto Hitler. And the rest of the world is to tolerate that! Some day the people of Germany will be punished by Providence as were the Jews. They will be scattered abroad the world. Germany, even if it wins the war, will in one way or another be devoured (aufgefressen) by the Slavs. The Germans will receive recognition only as individuals, but vanish forever as a nation. Thus reads the Lehnin prophecy: 'Infandum nefas morte piandum' (Unspeakable crime must be atoned by death)." No wonder, Foerster found it advisable to leave German-controlled territory! Such views and predictions undermine his erstwhile reputation as a scholar; the Lehnin prophecy is widely held to be spurious and even if genuine, actually predicts—the end of the Hohenzollern dynasty indeed—but thereafter a rebirth of Germany under a Catholic dynasty! Another such evil German prophet is Fritz Thyssen, who predicts (assuming that he, and not his publisher, actually wrote it), as a result of the war which he blames exclusively onto the Nazis: "No German in future will be able to show himself in the world without shame." (I Paid Hitler, p. 243). All this must be regarded as racial tragedy, objectively; subjectively, as a form of scandal and of distrust in Providence due to superficial appraisal of present-day developments in Germany.

Father Sturzo's Analysis

Father Luigi Sturzo, founder of the Italian Popular Party and now a political exile in this country as a result of his opposition to Fascism, contributes a rather lengthy article to the "Commonweal" of Nov. 21. It bears the title: "The Ways of Providence," and does treat the present outstanding phenomena—Communism, Nazism and the war--- not (as usual) on the basis of the latest report, but on the principle that Providence will in due time terminate present evils and turn evil into good. That is a commendable attitude, in comparison with the customary spreading of evil reports. But there is a strange bias in his view of how Providence will likely solve the problem. As to Nazism we are told: "Our whole civilization is at stake in the struggle initiated by Nazism for thirst of dominion and because of its subversion of moral values: the master race, the right of force, the contempt of Christian virtues and of every moral principle—all this shows a rupture of social solidarity, a wound that cannot be healed." But as to Communism: "Marxism developed amidst the workers of big industry in the second half of the past century. But what was the situation of the workers? Extremely bad from every point of view. And what were the men of government, the men of the Church, the wealthy classes doing for these pariahs of industrial society? Practically nothing. . . . When we say that the working classes and the youth have deserted Christianity, we are stating a very sad truth. But we forget that little has been done for the workers and for the youth." And then: "Bolshevism having shut the doors of the world even in the economic field and having limited the outside contacts to a few functionaries, deprived Russia of the possibility of evolution, except from within and with regard to Bolshevik affairs. But now with the war on, true alliances and real cooperation have be-

come necessary." Finally: "And tomorrow when, as we hope, those Benedictines, Dominicans, Jesuits and other members of religious orders, who have been preparing for years . . . will be enabled to go there under the shield of freedom, we will remember two Popes, Benedict and Pius, anticipated that day . . . Then better than today we will understand the ways of Providence." But why should not such be the providential course in Germany and Italy?

Christianity's Prospective Gain

While Father Sturzo holds forth prospects of Russia's conversion and maintains that Germany's Nazi wound "cannot be healed," his compatriots of the Milan Catholic daily "L'Italia" speak otherwise. They report that the idea of Pan-Slavism suffered a setback from Communism in Russia, that a new European union is favored in the Balkans and that this initiates a new trend also in religious affairs, which it explains thus: "The relations between Catholicism and Greek Orthodoxy thus shift onto a new course. The matter is delicate and complicated and was heretofore subject to divers political influences. Since these are now no longer prevalent, the way is probably open for more intimate contact and agreement, which in a way is favored also on their part. Particularly the exclusion of British influence from southeastern Europe will likely lead to newer religious trends, since intimate relations prevailed between Anglicanism and Russo-Greek Orthodoxy, which prevented Greek Catholics from making contacts with Latin and Eastern Catholicism---really a most logical course. The coming reconstruction may usher in desirable developments in that regard." It reports further a very favorable effect of the presence of Italian troops in Albania and Serbia. We believe that the final effect of present disturbances will be far more favorable to the cause of Christianity everywhere than is now apparent.

PROVOCATIVES

Trade unionists of England and of Soviet Russia held a joint convention.

Anti-Nazism has practically killed all interest in a corporative order and thus makes our country virtually an inescapable victim of Communism.

John Cudahy's book "The Armies March" is being killed by silence, presumably because he has dared to reveal things conflicting with the schemes of powers that be.

A recent Catholic press report from Rome conveys the impression there that "the world has reached a turning-point in its history." That means that we here also will experience a change.

Father Bohdan Olesh, American-born priest of Ukrainian descent and recently returned to this country after spending five years in Poland, stated in an interview: "Living under Nazi domination is preferred as the lesser evil by the Ukrainians."

Fritz Thyssen writes: "They [the Nazis] were willing to tolerate Bruening, without being represented in the Cabinet, if the Chancellor would be prepared to say that he would part company with the Socialists. . . . That should have been done; but the offer was refused." (I Paid Hitler, p. 91.)

"Hitler has a continent of slaves. Thus begins an article of just that character, published in the "Sign," and republished in the "Catholic Digest" which boasts of presenting "the golden thread of Catholic thought." Catholics should set an example in truthfulness, moderation and conciliation.

The Dutch writer, Pierre Van Paassen, writes in his "That Day Alone," that Holland's "illusionary policy of neutrality . . . was fundamentally a trick to appease Hitler." For: "In those years preceding the Second World War, Holland virtually lost its independence to the British Empire. England did not any longer look upon Holland as an independent state. Britain's frontiers were pushed eastward to the Rhine."

Catholics here have been left to believe that Vienna is a Catholic city. Fritz Thyssen calls it "the Red [that is, Communist] citadel" and excludes it from his scheme of a Catholic monarchy in central Europe.

A disagreeable experience at the St. Louis office of the Otis Elevator Company led us to wonder whether a like narrow attitude prevails in other American industries, with prospects of great harm to themselves.

Is not the "Osservatore Romano's" argument that "Catholicism cannot be compared with . . . any institution or interest whose fate depends on earthly events" a rebuke to President Roosevelt for his statement that Christianity will be destroyed, if Hitler wins?

Denunciation of Communism will not prevent its coming unless accompanied by practical promotion of a corporative order; in this latter, the reform work of the Fascist regimes is of value, insofar as it gives some guidance in possible preliminary procedure.

A noteworthy passage occurs in Father Olesh's interview, mentioned elsewhere on this page, namely, that to the Polish people "the clergy were leaders in all phases of religious and civic life." Which amply supports the presumption that the arrests of Polish priests by Nazis was due to their political, that is, revolutionary, rather than their religious activities.

In the article mentioned on the preceding page, Father Luigi Sturzo writes: "Perhaps no one among my readers knows of the intrigue carried on by the French Government of that time to induce the Holy See to condemn the Christian (Catholic) syndicates [labor unions] of Germany. . . . What Paris wanted was a Marxist Germany, in order to weaken the imperialism of Bismarck first and of Wilhelm later." Has not like pressure against Germany been brought to bear on the Vatican now?

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